

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
USMISSION NATO
AMCONSUL MUNICH
USUN NEW YORK 524
USMISSION BERLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PRAGUE 0509

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, PINT, CSCE, SHUM, CZ
SUBJECT: CHARTER 77

REF: MOSCOW 2509
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1. SUMMARY: THE STRIDENT ANTI-CHARTER 77 CAMPAIGN IN THE REGIME-
CONTROLLED MEDIA HAS BEEN FURTHER INTENSIFIED AND MAY PROTEND
A HARDER LINE TOWARD CHARTER ACTIVISTS. INCREASING REFERENCES
TO FOREIGN INSTIGATION OF AND SUPPORT FOR THE CHARTER ARE CAUSING
INCREASING CONCERN IN WESTERN DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES HERE.
INDRA'S SPEECH MARKING THE 29TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1948 COMMUNIST

TAKEOVER FOLLOWED THE CURRENT MEDIA LINE IN ATTACKING "RENEGADES" AND "JUDASES." END SUMMARY.

2. SHRILLER MEDIA TREATMENT: THE PAST WEEK HAS SEEN NO LET-UP IN THE MULTIMEDIA ANTI-CHARTER 77 CAMPAIGN; ON THE CONTRARY, IT HAS PRODUCED SOME INCREASE OF SHRILLNESS IN PERSONAL ATTACKS ON LEADING CHARTER ACTIVISTS. PHILOSOPHER JAN PATOCKA, ONE OF THE MOST ACTIVE ORGANIZERS OF PRODUCTION AND DISSEMINATION OF CHARTER DOCUMENTS, HAD UNTIL THIS WEEK BEEN FAIRLY WELL IGNORED BY THE MEDIA. IN THE LAST FEW DAYS, HOWEVER, THE RADIO, THE MAIN CULTURAL-POLITICAL WEEKLY TVORBA, AND THE SOCIALIST PARTY DAILY SVOBODNE SLOVO, ALL ELECTED TO DISCUSS AT LENGTH PATOCKA'S PERSONAL HISTORY AND HIS ALLEGED ANTI-MARXIST-LENINIST PHILOSOPHICAL VIEWS. FRANTISEK KRIEGLER ALSO CAME IN FOR ADDITIONAL LUMPS DURING THE WEEK. PERHAPS THE MOST THREATENING ASPECT OF THE CURRENT CAMPAIGN FOR THE ACTIVISTS IS THAT ACCUSATIONS THAT THE CHARTER IS FOREIGN-INSPIRED AND THAT ITS SUPPORTS ARE KNOWINGLY SERVING FOREIGN ENEMIES OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND OF COMMUNISM HAVE BECOME STANDARD. NOTABLY, THE PARTY PRESS HAS ALSO TAKEN AN INCREASINGLY TOUGH LINE IN ATTACKING THE WEST ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CSCE FINAL ACT -- THE FEBRUARY 19 ARTICLE BY DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER SPACIL IN RUDE PRAVO IS ESPECIALLY STRIDENT IN ECHOING CURRENT SOVIET POSITIONS ON CSCE.

3. HARSHER INTERROGATIONS: A SOURCE WHO CLAIMS TO BE CLOSE TO VACLAV HAVEL AND OTHER CHARTER LEADERS SAYS THAT SOME OF THE INTERROGATORS OF THE ACTIVISTS ARE LOSING THEIR COOL. PATOCKA, HAJEK AND LANDOVSKY WERE INTERROGATED AGAIN FEBRUARY 18 AND CONFIDENTIAL

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REPORTEDLY FOUND THAT THE POLICE WERE NO LONGER EXHIBITING THE CORRECT DEMEANOR THEY HAD GENERALLY EXPERIENCED IN THE PAST. INSTEAD, THE INTERROGATORS CLAIMED THAT THEY HAD LOST THEIR PATIENCE AND USED ABUSIVE METHODS.

4. FEARS OF WORSE TO COME: AS A RESULT OF THE INCREASINGLY MENACING TONE OF THE MEDIA AND ROUGHER INTERROGATION TECHNIQUES, THERE IS GROWING SPECULATION IN ACTIVISTS CIRCLES THAT ARRESTS AND TRIALS OF THE CHARTER LEADERS MAY BE IN THE OFFING. SOME OF OUR DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUES ARE ALSO BECOMING CONCERNED THAT THE HARDER LINE AND CURRENT RASH OF ACCUSATIONS OF ESPIONAGE AIMED AT VARIOUS WESTERN COUNTRIES FOREBODE ACTION AGAINST FOREIGN MISSIONS HERE. OUR BRITISH COLLEAGUES SEEM TO BE ESPECIALLY WORRIED, ALTHOUGH FOREKNOWLEDGE THAT SVETOZA SIMKO, THE EX-CTK REP IN BONN WHO ASKED FOR ASYLUM IN THE UK, WOULD SOON BE SURFACED MAY BE A MORE IMPORTANT CAUSE FOR THEIR NERVOUSNESS.

5. FUTURE ACTIVITY: ON THE CHARTER SIDE, A NUMBER OF SOURCES SUGGEST THAT A THIRD LIST OF SIGNERS, INCLUDING MORE "WORKERS",

WILL BE SURFACED AROUND MARCH 1, WHICH WOULD FIT IN WITH THE
PATTERN OBSERVED SO FAR BY THE ACTIVISTS OF RELEASING NAMES OF
SIGNERS ON THE FIRST OF THE MONTH. WE HAVE HEARD NO PREDICTIONS OF
THE NUMBER OF NEW SIGNAGURES. ON THE REGIME SIDE, THE POSSIBILITY
OF PROSECUTING CHARTER ACTIVISTS IS ALWAYS IN THE BACKGROUND,
ALTHOUGH HUSAK PROBABLY STILL HOPES THAT THE CURRENT PSYCHOLOGICAL
WARFARE CAMPAIGN WILL WEAR THE DISSIDENTS DOWN WITHOUT MORE
DRASTIC ACTION. WE HAVE HEARD THE REPORT THAT TWO PERSONS
DISTRIBUTING COPIES OF THE CHARTER WERE ARRESTED IN NORTHERN
BOHEMIA A SHORT TIME AGO, BUT CANNOT NOW CONFIRM ITS ACCURACY OR,
IF IT IS ACCURATE, DETERMINE WHETHER THE TWO WERE CHARGED
WITH A CRIME OR DETAINED FOR QUESTIONING. IF THE FORMER, IT
WILL BE THE FIRST CASE OF PROSECUTION THAT WE ARE AWARE OF FOR
SIMPLY DISTRIBUTING THE DOCUMENT. FEDERAL ASSEMBLY CHAIRMAN
ALOIS INDRA'S SPEECH FEBRUARY 24 AT THE CELEBRATION OF THE 29TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE COMMUNIST TAKEOVER ECHOED AND EMPHASIZED THE
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LINE CURRENTLY FOLLOWED BY THE MEDIA. WATCHED BY HUSAK, BILAK
AND OTHER PARTY BRASS, INDRA ATTACKED THE ANTI-COMMUNIST
CAMPAIGN IN THE WEST AND CLAIMED THAT FOREIGN ENEMIES OF COMMUNISM
FOUND SUPPORTERS AMONG "TRAITORS" AND DISSIDENTS LIVING IN
CZECHOSLOVAKIA, WHOM HE BRANDED AS "JUDASES" WHO DO NOT UNDERSTAND
THE CZECH PEOPLE. HE GAVE NO HINT THAT HARSHER MEASURES WERE
BEING CONTEMPLATED. INSTEAD, HIS STATEMENT THAT "WE HAVE
GIVEN THEM A FORCIBLE ANSWER IN THE LAST WEEKS" SUGGESTS THAT
THE LEADERSHIP IS SATISFIED WITH THE PROGRESS OF ITS
ANTI-CHARTER CAMPAIGN.

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ACTION EUR-12

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02
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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 PRAGUE 0509

6. COMMENT: THE TONE OF THE CURRENT RHETORIC OF THE ANTI-CHARTER CAMPAIGN MIGHT SUGGEST THAT THE HARD-LINE FACTION IN THE LEADERSHIP IS GAINING INFLUENCE IN POLICY DECISIONS ON HOW TO HANDLE THE CHARTER SITUATION. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THE IMPORTANT THING TO KEEP IN MIND IS THAT THE CAMPAIGN AFTER CONFIDENTIAL

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ALMOST TWO MONTHS REMAINS AT THE LEVEL OF RHETORIC AND PETTY HARASSMENT. FOR THE TIME BEING, WE ARE INCLINED TO BELIEVE THAT THE LEADERSHIP REMAINS GENERALLY UNITED AND WILL CONTINUE TO AVOID "ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES" AGAINST THE CHARTER ACTIVISTS; THE LEADERSHIP COVERS ITS ESSENTIALLY MODERATE APPROACH HOWEVER, WITH A SCREEN OF SHRILL ACCUSATIONS AND PROTESTATIONS. WE WOULD NOT, ON THE OTHER HAND, RULE OUT SOME ACTION, ONLY PERIPHERALLY RELATED TO THE CHARTER, AGAINST ONE OR MORE DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS. A HIGHLY PUBLICIZED SPY CASE AND AN EXCHANGE OF EXPULSIONS OF DIPLOMATS MIGHT SEEM TO BE AN EXCELLENT WAY TO DRAW ATTENTION AWAY FROM

THE CHARTER ISSUE FOR A SHORT TIME. THE NEED TO REACT TO THE SIMKO DEFECTION PROVIDES AN ADDITIONAL STIMULUS TO MAKE SOME MOVE AGAINST DIPLOMATS HERE. FRG DCM GIESDER INDICATES HE HAS BEEN REQUESTED TO CALL AT FOREIGN MINISTRY FEBRUARY 25 FOR WHAT HE EXPECTS WILL BE A DISCUSSION OF THE SIMKO CASE.

7. THE LEADERSHIP MAY ALSO BE TURNINGG THE CHARTER 77 CAMPAIGN TO SOME DOMESTIC PROFIT. THE ISSUE PROVIDES SOMETHING OF REAL SUBSTANCE TO TOUCH ON DURING THE CURRENT PROGRAM OF REFURBISHING

PARTY ORGANIZATION AND ACTIVITY AT THE LOCAL AND FACTORY LEVEL.
IT ALSO PROVIDES A BIT OF INTEREST THAT WOULD OTHERWISE BE LACKING
IN THE FORTHCOMING CONGRESSES OF THE ARTISTIC UNIONS, THE FIRST
OF WHICH-THE WRITERS' CONGRESS-STARTS MARCH 1.

8. IN THIS CURRENT SITUATION OF INCREASING PRESSURE BY THE
REGIME AND UNCERTAINTY AS TO WHAT MAY HAPPEN NEXT, IT IS NOT
SURPRISING THAT THE LOCAL RUMOR MILL HAS BECOME HYPERACTIVE.
THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CURRENT RUMOR IN PRAGUE -- ON WHICH THE
EMBASSY POSSESSES NO SUBSTANTIATING EVIDENCE WHATEVER -- IS
THAT A HUSAK-BREZHNEV MEETING IS BEING PLANNED, PERHAPS WITH OTHER
WARSAW PACT PARTY SECRETARIES PRESENT, FOR DISCUSSIONS ON THE
ONGOING STRUGGLE IN EASTERN EUROPE OVER HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS.
FROWICK

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